



# Halfway to the Master of Arts

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I.

You ask me what I want to do  
with my degree — once I have it.  
I scan my bookshelf. *I am Malala*  
in *The Jungle To Kill a Mockingbird* my  
*Beloved* *Catcher in the Rye*, *Peace*  
*is Every Step* in *Herland*, *The Monk*,  
*Frankenstein* discovers *The Mysteries*  
*of Udolpho*, *Lord of the Flies*. I pick  
at my nail polish. What will you write  
your thesis on? What classes will you take?  
I check my email. Will you go  
for more school? and Facebook.  
Do you know where you are going?

II.

I paddle my boat on calm water,  
taking in the sights. Clouds glide,  
forming shapes then subside.  
Birds dart between rock clefts; sun  
sparkles on the water. The paddle  
glides in; I pull it back and shift  
forward under the bridge. My orange  
life jacket starts roasting. I dip my hand  
into cool water and rub the droplets  
into my neck and arms and hair. Droplets  
cling to me — dew in the morning grass.  
I pull the paddle in with me and wait.  
I don't care where I am going. This spot  
suits me, and I am enjoying the breeze.